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For Immediate release - July 02, 2009

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES AWARD OF FEDERAL GRANT TO MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' SERVICES TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED VETERANS

WORCESTER - Thursday, July 02, 2009 - The Patrick-Murray administration today announced that the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services has been awarded a \$300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to address the problem of homelessness among Massachusetts veterans.

The grant is part of the U.S. Department of Labor's Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP), which works to expedite the reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force. The HVRP program is the only federal program whose sole focus is the employment of homeless veterans. The grant will be used to fund programs that involve emergency shelter, job counseling and referrals, and employment assistance.

"This funding will help us provide services for some of our bravest men and women," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray. "I am grateful for the work our Department of Veterans' Services and the federal delegation have done to make this funding available."

DVS has partnered with Veterans, Inc. in Worcester for the Urban Homeless Veterans' Employment Initiative. This program will work to accomplish three key objectives in the Worcester, Fall River, New Bedford and surrounding areas: 1) assisting homeless veterans as they reintegrate back into the workforce; 2) assisting veterans in obtaining more independent housing; and 3) stimulating the development of effective service delivery systems to address the issues facing homeless and unemployed veterans in the Commonwealth.

Massachusetts will utilize its extensive network of veterans' programs and services to outreach and promote awareness of these new programs to veterans throughout the Commonwealth. DVS has successfully managed and administered HVRP grants in prior years and, as a result, expects to begin outreach of these services within weeks of the start date.

"For decades, MVI has been providing critical services to our veterans," said U.S. Congressman Jim McGovern. "During this 4th of July holiday, we must remember that there are Americans who served our country that need - and deserve - our help. I'm very pleased that the federal government is providing this financial support."

"Employment and housing are two of the biggest challenges facing veterans," said Tom Kelley, Secretary of Veterans' Services. "These grants will help meet these challenges by assisting veterans to live independently and demonstrate skills learned through the training and work ethic demonstrated in their military service. Working in conjunction with our partners at the local, state, and federal levels we will see to it that this is no longer just a dream for our service members, but can become a certainty."

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